
Bagram News Express

Fighting Terror, Building Peace

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From Expeditionary to Enduring

By Lt. Col. John Sotham

455 Expeditionary Force Support Squadron commander

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan—I had done it before. Sitting before a computer drawing up my first commander's call slides. But this time was different. I'd never had a need to explain to my Airmen what the squadron actually did. Before, it had been as apparent as the function badges they wore on their uniforms.

But, how to outline the unit here? The 455th Expeditionary Force Support Squadron is a unique blend of personnel support for contingency operations, a communications flight, and services. As I mused over that salad bowl of missions—a mix that would be unusual stateside—I searched for a common thread.

How do you make a "Cable Dog" (a term of en-

dearment for a Comm troop who runs and maintains phone and fiber lines) feel a "connection" with his fellow squadron mate who plans morale and fitness programs? Or, how do you build camaraderie between the personnelist at the PAX terminal and the dedicated troops in the mail room, or between the guy working our huge lodging puzzle and the Airmen keeping the airfield's precision approach radar working?

That first commander's call is very important. It's where you lay out the roadmap for what your unit will achieve together, and, if you're successful, begin the process of building a sense of common purpose, mutual support, and shared vision.

I dropped a map in my presentation of how Camp Cunningham will look in 2010, with B-huts replaced with RLBs, improved morale facilities, and a strength-

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Small idea making a big difference

By Master Sgt. James Law

455 Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

LAGHMAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan—Provincial Reconstruction Teams are engaged daily in large-scale projects building roads, bridges, schools and medical facilities to help the Afghan government develop its infrastructure. They also contribute small ideas that have the potential for large-scale impact.

One such idea was to design and fabricate a hand-held seed spreader that can be used by farmers to spread fertilizer.

"Our Department of Agriculture representative came to me and said 'I heard you could design stuff, is there anyway to design a seed spreader?,'" said Staff Sgt. Tim Bayes, Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team Engineering NCO in charge.

Sergeant Bayes explained Afghan farmers currently spread their fertilizer by hand. This method places more fertilizer in some areas and less in others.

"If you go out there you can see the inconsistency in the growth patterns in the fields," said Sergeant Bayes. "If they can effectively

spread the fertilizer so their growth pattern is consistent, it could increase their crops by 15 to 25 percent annually."

Understanding the impact the simple idea could have, Sergeant Bayes started the design taking into consideration the materials the local Afghan farmers have to use.

"We actually talked to our contractors and locals and asked what the people have around their farms," said Sergeant Bayes. "Nuts and bolts are pretty easy to come by, pieces of plywood or just chunks

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of wood, and tin cans or canvas bags were the materials we had to work with.”

After one and half days of design, Sergeant Bayes met with the Department of Agriculture representative to review the blueprint and make final adjustments before building a prototype.

“It took me about half a day to build it,” said Sergeant Bayes. “This is kind of different, a little bit unique compared to what we normally do, and it was fun to do it.”

Sergeant Bayes added during a discussion with the Afghan government’s Department of Agriculture representative the idea of having prisoners build the spreader for distribution was addressed.

“They were talking about using the prisoners to possibly build these so they could do it cheap, effectively and distribute them out, at least to get them out so the people can see what they are made out of and how they are made,” said Sergeant Bayes.

He added once the spreader is initially distributed to some, the farmers could share with each other so those without could easily build one themselves.

“It not only helps them as far as income, but an increase in crops will also help supply and demand in the local economies,” said Sergeant Bayes. “If it helps 10 farmers to produce more crops to help people, then it was worth it.”



LAGHMAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Staff Sgt. Tim Bayes, Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team Engineering NCO in charge, demonstrates how to use a spreader he designed and built for use by Afghan farmers. Sergeant Bayes is deployed from Naval Construction Training Center, Gulfport, Miss. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. James Law)

News Briefs

MUSIC NIGHTS

Stop by the Camp Cunningham Recreation Tent to listen to your favorite genre of music...there's something for everyone. R&B Music Night is Friday at 2100L/1630Z. Country Music Night is Sunday at 1800L/1330Z. Salsa Night is Monday at 2030L/1600Z.

COMBAT O

Combat Orientation is Thursday at 0900Z/1330L at the Enduring Freedom Chapel. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Air Field. Newcomers must attend the briefing within a week of their arrival. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the 1st Sergeants at the end of the Week.

COMBAT PUSH

Combat Push times are Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Camp Cunningham Rec Tent from 0900L/0430Z to 1000L/0530Z. Services, Comm and PERSCO will be available to sign outprocessing checklists. Personnel must complete your Post Deployment Health Questionnaire on-line and pick up your medical records at Flight Medicine/Public Health before coming to Combat Push. For more information call 431-4409.

ATTENTION ALL JUNIOR NCOs

The Bagram AF Route 5/6 meets Thursdays at 1800L/1330Z at Camp Cunningham's Town Hall. The meetings are open to all staff sergeant selects, staff sergeants and tech sergeants. Contact Tech Sgt. Scott Snedeker, 431-4404 or Staff Sgt. Tamesha Cobb, 431-4404 for more information.

BAGRAM AIRFIELD FLIGHTLINE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron reminds all service members that the Bagram Airfield flightline is a “controlled area” and all personnel require either specific inclusion on a certified entry authorization list (EAL), a restricted area badge issued by the 455 ESFS Pass & Registration section, or an authorized escort. Additionally, personnel driving vehicles onto the flight line must have both a restricted area badge and an authenticated AF Form 483 (Flightline Driving Competency Card) on their person to enter. For additional questions or concerns, please contact Air Force Security Forces operations at 481-6018.

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ened infrastructure. Then it became clear...everything our squadron does or will do on a daily basis would mean progress toward that goal: transforming Camp Cunningham from when it was the center of fierce fighting between Taliban and Coalition forces, to the day when no vestiges of expeditionary operations will remain. Today, we're not at either end of that continuum; we're midway in the journey.

But, all of us in the Wing make progress every day. Lodging in this environment is a headache. What if we could better track inbounds, and

have their names already matched to a bed? Within weeks, the Comm troops were talking to PERSCO about lodging system upgrades, and getting them information from the main system that tracks passenger movement. The hardworking Services Airmen also began to work with Comm on improved morale computers and a future wireless Internet offering. Services and PERSCO began to see their inter-relatedness: Once an Airman is inprocessed, he or she needs a bed, maybe a few toiletry items forgotten or lost that they can pick up from the Services tent, and directions to base facilities.

So often in a deployed environment, there's a tendency to get your

minimal spin up, then get to work as your predecessor heads to the PAX Terminal with a big smile on his face. Some of that is just the way it is, but the bigger challenge is to accomplish the daily mission while still making those incremental steps that will drive Camp Cunningham toward a more permanent footprint. It's pretty clear that the U.S. Air Force will be at Camp Cunningham and involved in the fight against terrorism for a very long time.

Given those facts, the leadership challenge is to look beyond your tour. Set processes and improvements in motion that will have pay-offs well beyond your departure date and help drive Bagram from expeditionary to enduring!

The USAFCENT Band "Falcon" is scheduled to perform throughout Bagram Air Field June 21 and June 22.

June 21--Expeditionary Operations Group Change of Command in the A-10 Fuels Hanger at 0700 local.

June 21--Maintenance and Operations performance in the F-15 Maintenance breakroom at 1530 local.

June 22--Route 5/6 performance at 1100 local.

June 22--BAF All performance in the large MWR clamshell at 2000 local.

The USAFCENT Band is the first permanently assigned Air Force band to the AFCENT Area of Responsibility. Based in Southwest Asia, the band is comprised of deployed Airmen from Active Duty, Reserve and Air National Guard bands.

A promotional poster for the USAFCENT Band "Falcon". The top section features the text "USAFCENT PRESENTS" in white, followed by the band's name "FALCON" in large, bold, blue-outlined white letters. Below the name, the text "The Best in Rock, Pop, and Country" is written in white. The bottom half of the poster is a black and white photograph of the band members performing. They are wearing military uniforms and playing various instruments including saxophones, trumpets, a guitar, a bass, and a keyboard. The U.S. Air Force logo and the motto "U.S. AIR FORCE ABOVE ALL." are in the top right corner.